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Agenda item 25
United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations

Letter dated 9 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that the International Seminar on Environment, Religion and Culture was held at Tehran from 18 to 20 June 2001. I wish also to enclose, herewith, the Tehran Declaration which was adopted by the Seminar (see annex).

I would highly appreciate it if the Tehran Declaration could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 25.

(*Signed*) Hadi **Nejad-Hosseinian**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 9 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Tehran Declaration on Environment, Religion and Culture

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 53/22 of 4 November 1998, proclaiming the year 2001 as the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations, as well as the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly,

Recalling also the Millennium Declaration adopted by the United Nations Millennium Assembly, held in New York in September 2000, as well as the Declaration adopted at the World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual leaders held in conjunction with the Millennium Summit,

Recalling also the Assisi Declarations as well as the conservation conference on "Sacred Gifts for a Living Planet" held at Kathmandu in November 2000,

Recalling also the Jeddah Declaration on Islam and Environment, adopted in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in October 2000,

Recalling also the Harvard series of seminars on world religions and ecology,

Reaffirming that inter-religious dialogue, based on mutual respect and understanding, is essential for promoting international peace and security, including its environmental and social dimensions,

Reaffirming also that lasting international peace and security calls for an attitude of reverence for all kinds of life on Earth and respect for the environment for the benefit of present and future generations,

Recalling that all religions around the world have basic common values revolving around respect for life and the need to live in harmony with nature,

Recalling also that throughout human civilization, religious precepts have had a positive influence on the natural environment, although practice often has lagged behind precepts,

Emphasizing that humanity stands at a critical juncture in history, one that requires reconciling religious precepts and practices for the protection of life on Earth,

Emphasizing also, as documented by the United Nations Environment Programme, that ecological crises facing humanity are deeply rooted in a complex web of political, economic, social, technological as well as inadequate societal attitudes, belief systems and perceptions,

Stressing that over-consumption and mismanagement of natural resources as well as widespread poverty and the debt burden are among the main causes of environmental degradation, which has reached unprecedented levels,

Aware also of the unique potential of the religions to inform, inspire and instruct people throughout the world as well as of the need to retrieve, re-evaluate and reconstruct core human and ecological values embedded in the different traditions,

Recalling the call by Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Religious Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, for promoting the protection of the environment as a religious duty through a holy combat for the protection of the environment based on our respective religious precepts,

Recalling also the proposal of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, aimed at enhancing the inter-religious dialogue on environment,

Mindful that inter-religious dialogue on environment of an interdisciplinary nature should include scientists and representatives of civil society,

Conscious of our moral and religious obligation to provide to future generations a planet as healthy as the one that we inherited,

We, the participants in the International Seminar on Environment, Religion and Culture, held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, from 18 to 20 June 2001:

1. *Reaffirm* our commitment to the achievement of the objectives of the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations, including the inter-religious dialogue on environment;

2. *Reaffirm* the Millennium Declaration adopted by the United Nations Millennium Summit, held in New York in September 2000, which provides that "the current unsustainable patterns of production and consumption must be changed in the interest of our future welfare and that of our descendants";

3. *Express our deep conviction* that religious, moral and ethical values can play a major role in addressing the global as well as the local environmental challenges facing humanity;

4. *Commit ourselves* to educate our respective communities and followers on the environmental content of our religion with a view to promoting environmentally responsible behaviour;

5. *Commit ourselves*, in addition to educating, to promote practices that are in accordance with our religious and cultural beliefs and based on respect for life and the need to live in harmony with nature and, in this regard, call on the need to promote liability for environmental damage;

6. Based on our conviction that the inter-religious dialogue on issues related to environment are mutually beneficial for humanity, we call on the United Nations Environment Programme, in consultation with interested partners, to establish an inter-religious and multidisciplinary Forum on Environment to be convened on a regular basis;

7. In view of the fact that the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002 is a landmark event on sustainable development, invite the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in consultation with interested partners, to convene a World Religious Summit on Environment as a contribution to that historical event;

8. *Request* the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to transmit the present Declaration as well as the proceedings of this seminar to the high-level segment of

the United Nations General Assembly on the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations to be held in New York in December 2001;

9. *Express our deep gratitude* to the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran H.E. Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, and to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and, in particular, the Department of the Environment, for convening this Seminar and for the measures taken to ensure its success.

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Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 12
Report of the Economic and Social Council

United Nations Population Award

Note by the Secretary-General*

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund on the United Nations Population Award, established by the Assembly in its resolution 36/201 of 17 December 1981. The report, which covers 2001, was prepared in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 1982/112 of 26 April 1982.

Report on the United Nations Population Award (2001)

I. Introduction

1. On 17 December 1981, by its resolution 36/201, the General Assembly established the United Nations Population Award. The Award is presented annually to an individual or individuals, to an institution or institutions or to any combination thereof for the most outstanding contribution to increasing awareness of population questions or to finding solutions to them.

2. The laureate is selected by the Committee for the United Nations Population Award, which is composed of representatives of 10 States Members of the United Nations elected by the Economic and Social Council for a period of three years.

3. On 5 December 1986, by its decision 41/445, the General Assembly amended article 2, paragraph 1, of the regulations governing the Award (resolution 36/201, annex), so that an individual and an institution could share the Award.

4. On 26 May 1987, by its decision 1987/129, the Economic and Social Council amended the rules of procedure of the Committee for the Population Award accordingly.

* The footnote requested by General Assembly resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

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5. On 3 May 2000, the Economic and Social Council selected the following countries to serve on the Committee for a period of three years beginning in January 2001: Burundi, Cape Verde, Kyrgyz Republic, Lesotho, Netherlands and Republic of Moldova. The Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund serve as ex-officio members. The Executive Director also acts as Secretary of the Committee. The Award consists of a diploma, a gold medal and a monetary prize.

6. On 3 May 2001, the Council elected Haiti to fill a postponed vacancy beginning on the date of the election and expiring on 31 December 2003.

7. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council decision 2001/201 B of 3 May 2001, the Council further postponed to a future session the election of two members from Asian States and one member from Latin American and Caribbean States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2003.

8. On 10 May 2001, the Committee elected Pierre Lelong (Haiti) as Chairman.

II. The 2001 United Nations Population Award

9. A total of 10 nominations from qualified nominators were received for the 2001 United Nations Population Award. Of these, eight were for the individual category and two for the institutional category. In May 2001, within the mandate given to it by the General Assembly, and after a thorough review of the nominations, the Committee selected Nafis Sadik in the individual category and the Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning in the institutional category, as the laureates for 2001.

10. Dr. Nafis Sadik was selected in view of her tremendous impact on population and development issues during her tenure as Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund. She led the world's largest source of multilateral assistance to population programmes. The influence of the Fund on world population policy is arguably stronger than that of any other agency or organization, largely because it speaks on behalf of all nations. Dr. Sadik made significant contributions during the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994. The International Conference resulted in enormous changes to the field of population. The Conference saw a change in global consensus that put human rights, and specifically women's rights, at the heart of the population debate. Dr. Sadik was particularly effective in steering this consensus throughout the Conference because of her personal commitment to issues of women's rights and women's health and because of her exceptional leadership skills.

11. The Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning was selected because of its outstanding contribution to population issues in the developing world as well as in Japan. It is the most experienced Japanese non-governmental organization internationally active in the field of population and reproductive health, with projects in 26 countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa, and is especially committed to contributing to health and education. The Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Faculty Planning has contributed to population questions and to their solutions in three major areas: the community-operated integrated approach to family planning; the sharing of Japanese expertise through human resource development; and what the organization calls

"multidimensional advocacy and resource development for the issues of population and reproductive health/reproductive rights". Since the adoption of the Programme of Action at the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, and the five-year follow-up to the Conference in 2000, the Japanese approach of integrating family planning into maternal and child health has gained much attention.

III. Financial matters

12. As at 1 January 2000, the Trust Fund had a total of $760,858. Interest income in 2000 was $10,599. Expenditures in 2000, including the prizes, totalled $53,761. The closing balance as at 31 December 2000 totalled $717,696.